

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-47), senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, attended a hearing today to ask our nation's top general and a defense policy expert about the eventual withdrawal of our troops in Afghanistan.

General David Petraeus and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Michael Flournoy testified before the Committee to provide a candid assessment of the status of the United States operations in Afghanistan. Rep. Sanchez, concerned by recent suggestions that U.S. troops will likely be required to help secure Afghanistan beyond 2014, though our country's NATO allies are scheduled to pull their troops by the end of 2011, asked General Petraeus to clarify what constitutes success in the war and when the armed forces can begin a withdrawal.

"From where I stand, this war is ultimately about who can outlast the other, in which case we are sacrificing too many lives and wasting too much of our resources," said Sanchez. "The United States cannot support a costly protracted military conflict with no end in sight, especially as future generations are faced with higher taxes and slashing cuts to federal investments in priorities such as education and health care."